



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

STALKING WILD GOATS.

THERE is a sport to be enjoyed in some few remote parts of Scotland which yields to none that can be found in the kingdom in its possibilities of adventure and its picturesqueness. Stalking wild goats requires the same hunting craft as deerstalking, and the ground to be traversed before a satisfactory chance of a shot can be obtained is quite as difficult and admits as many thrilling episodes as the mountain heights on which the ibex and the chamois hold their court. So highly did wild-goat shooting appeal to Colquhoun, the well-known author of *The Moor and the Loch*, that he seriously suggested the introduction in suitable places of a stock of wild goats, which he thought would, after a few years, offer a sport quite equal to the chase of the red deer. It has been my great good fortune to be allowed to stalk some of the presently existing wild goats, and it may be worth while to record some of my impressions.

On the Atlantic side of one of the largest of the Hebrides great cliffs rear themselves from the sea to a height of nigh nine hundred feet, and at their base are gigantic masses of débris from Nature's workshop, piled in rude confusion. Vegetation is there of the wildest. The iron belt of black reefs, washed by the tide, is rich in groves of seaweed, which float partially submerged. Wind-twisted bushes and patches of dense brake cling to the rocks, and thrust their twining roots into crevice and cleft. On the bare scours tufts of heather have settled themselves in purple beauty, emigrants from the uplands far above; and in one or two sheltered spots there are even some small thickets of hardy trees. Seen from a distance seaward, the great expanse of cliffs stretching away for miles appears to present a flat and unbroken face; but when winds and waves permit a landing to be made the whole coast-line shows infinitely varied features—some in sunshine, some in shade—precipice, cavern, gorge, valley, silvery pool,

and roaring torrent. It is on this primeval portion of the island that the goats dwell in the midst of a wilderness where the powers of Nature reign supreme, untrammelled by any of the evidences of man's arts.

The herds are really wild, and come of a wild ancestry. For uncounted generations they have maintained themselves in perfect freedom, and have not sullied their blood by any mixture of a domesticated race. It is possible that, in the distant past, they may have come from a stock which lived among the dwellings of man; but they have now occupied their rocky fastnesses for so long that they may take rank as true *fera naturæ*.

If a campaign against these wild goats is to be undertaken, the attack cannot be commenced from the landward side. It would be almost impossible to descend the beetling cliff; and the enterprise, if attempted, would require an undue length of time, besides the assistance of ropes and all the paraphernalia of alpine climbing. So a sea-passage must be made; and it is not on every day of the year that a boat can brave the rollers of the Atlantic or approach the surf-beaten reefs, so that a landing can be effected. I was fortunate, however; and, though the day was cloudy with occasional showers, and light wreaths of mist floated round the lofty crests of the various Bens that look down upon the sea-loch, there was not much sea running, and we pushed off from the primitive little pier with every hope of a not too eventful voyage. Our crew consisted of the stalker, a couple of boatmen, and myself; and, though I knew something of sport in various lands, I was now content to conduct myself as a neophyte, and to obey the orders of the stalker, who was master of the situation. A few strokes with the oars cleared our little craft from the shore, the mast was stepped, and the brown lugsail run up. There was a sudden heave as the boat heeled over and plunged into an advancing wave, covering us with a shower of spray. A careful hand was kept on the

sheet, and a watchful eye looked for the sudden squall which might be expected to whistle down each glen that broke the mass of surrounding mountains. More than once the sheet was perforce let go, and we evaded the power of the keen blast that cut the spindrift from the crested waves. Sea-birds swooped and hovered round us, guillemots dived at our bows, and groups of oyster-catchers rose from the rocky islets that we passed, piping their shrill cry: 'Keep clear! keep clear!'

At last we approached the mouth of the long sea-loch and rounded the black headland. The open Atlantic seas swept down large and threatening; but the breeze was steady, and our little boat rode over them easily. We put our helm up, and pushed on within half a mile of the great cliffs that frowned above the island shore. We had the haunts of the wild goats before us, and in that wide panorama we had to single out our game before we could consider how to attack it. Glasses were uncased, and we carefully scanned the lower cliffs and piles of rock, to detect, if possible, the sought-for herd; and this was no easy matter, for, as is the case with all wild animals, the colour of the goats blends almost indistinguishably with that of their natural surroundings. If they were in the most exposed situation, and remained perfectly steady, it would require a very trained eye and a very powerful stalking-glass to note their presence; but the slightest motion attracts attention and betrays them, so for the moment we confined ourselves to seeking for some moving object. Suddenly I caught a glimpse of some living thing passing from the shelter of one great boulder to that of another. 'What is that, Dougal?' I asked, rather proud in thinking myself the first to see game. But I was promptly snubbed. 'That iss three deer. I haf seen them for some time. They wass lying near that bit wood.' They proved to be a young stag and a couple of hinds that had strayed from the deer-forest, possibly in search of some seaware. As they came more clearly into view, moving towards the airy track that would lead them to the distant pass, very tiny they looked in the midst of their stupendous environment. We stood closer in to the rocks, and peered anxiously into every recess as it opened to our view. At last the stalker said, 'There they are,' and pointed to a mass of gray boulders. At first I could just distinguish a slate-coloured object barely showing itself, which might or might not be an animal's head; but the stalker had made no mistake, for, as the boat slid forward other objects came into sight, and we could identify a small herd—nannies, kids, and one or two long-horned, patriarchally-bearded billies.

How fitly these noble-looking children of the mist took their place in the wild landscape! Picturesque and dignified, they were little like

the poor animals that we associate with the name of goat, living out their peaceful lives in some frowsy farmyard or drawing a toy carriage at a watering-place. In their proud freedom they seemed more akin to the alpine chamois or the ibex of the Neighberries. We turned our boat's prow away from the shore, and stood out to sea, so that, while we held a council of war upon our future proceedings, we might not alarm the herd and scatter them in flight. It was evident that, if a successful stalk was to be accomplished, we must work from the leeward of the game, and that there was no easy stroll before us if we were to come within rifle-range; so we pushed on far enough to lull suspicion in the watchful vedettes that had marked us sailing by, and then, hidden by a high and rocky point, sought for a convenient landing-place. Well, there are different views of convenience; and if any reader imagines that we found a natural harbour, or even were able to beach our boat on a sloping bed of sand, he or she has never seen the wild Hebrides. After long search, the best that offered was a little cleft in the black reef, and our bows were shoved into it. A tuft of seaweed was grappled with a boat-hook, and those who were for shore had to jump on to a slippery rock while it was for a moment left clear by the heaving waves. The feat was accomplished with a scramble, and the stalker and I found ourselves making our way from crag to crag, while the tide washed and churned beneath us and around.

'We will go up the hill a bit, and get between them and the high pass, in case they are turning that way,' said the stalker. *Hookum hai* ('It is an order'), as we say in India; and the ascent was commenced. I have done some stalking at home and abroad, but never have I met any toil more trying to wind and limb than that climb. First the piles of fallen rocks, reaching high over the shore, had to be surmounted, on which a boot studded with nails took no satisfactory foot-hold. How I longed for the soles made of woven grass, worn in Indian mountain-climbing, which take a firm grip of any surface, however smooth and treacherous, and defy any chance of slipping. Then we plunged into a thicket and wormed our upward way through intertwined and tough branches, whose sturdy resistance recalled the undergrowth of a tropical forest. Then across an open scarp, dislodging at every footstep stones and masses of earth, which went hurtling away down into depths below, and clinging to every chance tuft of heather or bent-grass that struggled for a bare existence on the bald and wind-swept face. How long our climb lasted cannot be estimated. It seemed as if we had been moving for hours, when, to my profound thankfulness, the stalker thought that we had mounted high enough, and that we had gained such a point of vantage that we might turn downwards towards the herd, sure that, if they were alarmed by anything, or

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took it into their heads to move, we should be in the track that they must follow, and would have a chance of intercepting them.

Our movements so far, if toilsome, had at least been conducted on our legs; but now all human dignity was to be abandoned, and we had to grovel forward as best we might on hands and knees, and even occasionally sink upon that vulgar portion of our persons politely called the waist. Before we made our second start a careful survey of our general direction was taken, and the possibilities of eddying gusts coming round corners, which might give our wind to the goats, were discounted by some deviations from a direct advance, and the rifle was carefully loaded. Our course was full of more incident than there is space to describe. I was prepared to bump my shins, to abrade my hands, and to rub the buttons off my garments; and this, of course, I did in full measure; but it was disconcerting indeed when the stalker put up a warning hand and pointed to a venomous viper wriggling to one side of our path. The Hebridean viper's bite is not fatal, but it causes very sufficient and prolonged personal inconvenience, and is by no means to be made light of. I could not help remembering and rather shuddering at the fact that where there is one there are likely to be two or three more, and that it behoved us to 'gang warily' while we were in such dangerous haunts.

Ha! what is that very strong odour that penetrates my nostrils? The wild goat has a very well-defined bouquet of his own, and there is no overlooking the spot where he has been lately grazing. It was evident that we were hard upon our game, and the stalker's advance was made with redoubled caution. For some anxious moments my view of the world was limited to a study of the nails in his brogues, and I grieved that the artistic design which they formed in his soles was generally so completely lost to the world. We crawled round our last boulder. Dougal gave a little motion with his hand, and began to slip the rifle from its case. I saw that the critical moment had arrived, lifted my head, and looked. There was the herd, some feeding, some gambolling and butting each other in a friendly way, all in fancied security.

There is always a deep pleasure to any one who has even a bowing acquaintance with natural history in prying into the family-life of wild animals, and seeing what they do and how they live when their *vis intime* is undisturbed. I sympathise with a well-known and good American sportsman who has performed more exploits with the rifle than most men now living. His greatest joy now is in the stalk itself, and in pitting his intelligence against that of a wild animal, so that he can approach it near enough to study at his leisure all the minutiae of its habits. He carries no more deadly weapon than a camera, and his

trophy of the chase is a photograph of the game. He has all the pleasure that the most exciting sportsman can give, and when it is over he can enjoy a triumph unstained with blood. I have not, however, yet attained to such a philosophical pre-eminence, and I eagerly clutched the rifle that was put into my hands. Did a stalker on such an occasion ever fail to say 'Tak' time'? The idea is firmly impressed on every stalker's mind that the sportsman under his charge is so excited that he will hurry unduly over his shot; and, indeed, it is justified in most cases. After the whispered caution, he indicated a venerable gray billy with magnificent backward-sweeping horns, to whom the rest of the herd seemed to pay unquestioned deference. 'That will be the master-goat. Wait till he turns more this way.' The rifle was laid on a tussock of heather and directed on the bearded patriarch. Slowly he went on nibbling at some tender herbage that he had found, and gradually turned his broadside to me. Crack! The bullet sped, and the poor old billy gave a faint cry as he was mortally stricken. There was a *sauve qui peut* of all his tribe; all betook themselves to panic flight, bounding from rock to rock, and disappearing in the recesses of the wilderness. But their patriarchal ruler's time had come. Feebly he tried to stagger after them, and there was little difficulty in running forward and giving him the *coup de grâce*. Never again would he tread the fastnesses so long his home. Another, taking his place, would become the master-goat, and his harem would pass to another lord.

The obsequies of a goat are best observed from the windward side. Dignified and picturesque as he is in life and at a distance, he is very full-flavoured at close quarters. The head of my billy looks down upon me as I write this; but, though it has gone through many processes at the hands of the taxidermist, it was long before it ceased to shed into the hall where it hangs an odour more noticeable than pleasant. How the stalker was sufficiently callous to perform the *gralloch* was a matter of wonder; still more, that he was able to contemplate with pleasure the eating of certain mysterious parts of the body, which he extracted with care, and laid aside as delicacies for home consumption.

A sandwich, a drink, a smoke. Our boat has followed us round the coast, and is now lying rocking in a little cove hard by the great cavern where the old Jacobite lord lay concealed for months after the '45. Truly the king's officers and soldiers must have had no easy duty in searching for him. The *Sidier Roy* of those days, in their old stiff equipment, were in no case for boat-work in stormy seas and patrolling such a rough coast.

I have told something about stalking wild goats. I can wish for my readers no better fortune than to enjoy such good sport.

T O R P E D O - B O A T 2 4 0 .

CHAPTER II.

THE mimic war had begun, and for five days the rival fleets had been engaged in active hostilities. A portion of the invading squadron, consisting of two first-class ironclads, three second-class, a fast cruiser, and three torpedo-boats, had broken out from the port in which they were blockaded and escaped into the mouth of the Channel, where they hoped to be joined by the rest of the fleet. The weather there had been boisterous, and still looked very unsettled; there was a brisk wind blowing, and although the sea was not heavy enough seriously to incommod the large craft, the torpedo-boats were making very bad weather of it. They were, indeed, almost buried in the seas, and were rolling and wallowing so deeply that it was well-nigh impossible to maintain a footing upon their decks.

'Well, I have had enough of torpedo work, Mr Groves,' Lieutenant Winter said to the chief engineer as they stood together on the deck of No. 240, each holding firmly to one of the fittings in order to maintain his footing. 'For smooth water they are fine little craft, but they are no more fit to keep the sea in such weather as this than they are to fly. The motion is awful. I have been ill half-a-dozen times, for the first time since I joined as a midshipman. Two of the men have got badly hurt by being dashed against the bed-places, and the whole crew are completely knocked up with straining and fatigue. As to sleep, it is out of the question, unless you want to get your brains knocked out against the opposite side of the cabin.'

'My hands are dead knocked up,' the engineer said; 'stoking in such weather as this is no joke. Luckily we have not to keep up any great head of steam.'

The lieutenant nodded. 'There is not much sea on, however, for a craft of any size. If a cruiser were to come upon a fleet of torpedo-boats in a rough sea she would be able to capture the lot of them.'

'They are not fit for the sea,' the engineer growled. 'I would as soon be afloat in a bandbox. I would rather take a job for life in a collier than have three months at sea in one of them.'

'The flag-ship is signalling, sir,' the quartermaster, who was at the helm, said.

The lieutenant watched the little black balls going up the mast-head. 'It is our signal,' he said as they broke out into flags; and then ran below.

'Torpedo-boats make for Queenstown,' he said as he returned; 'that is a comfort.'

He took the answering pennant from the sig-

nalling locker and hoisted it himself. 'Lay her head north, quartermaster. I will give you the bearings in a minute; and he again ran down to consult the chart. 'North-west by north,' he said, when he returned.

'How far do you make it, sir?'

'About sixty-five knots. I wish we had got the order three hours ago; we should have been in by daylight then. You may as well give us a little more steam. We might try twelve knots; if we find that runs her under too much we can slow down a knot or two; but we will hold on if we can at that. I don't like the look of the sky, and I suppose the Admiral doesn't either, or he would not have sent us off; for I know that this was specially intended as a trial whether torpedoes could keep company with the fleet in anything like moderate weather.'

No. 240 was the smallest of the three boats. For a time they kept together, but she made worse weather than the others, and gradually dropped behind. The senior officer hoisted the signal, 'Shall we wait for you?' and Winter replied, 'No, you had better go on; we will steam easily.'

'That is better,' he said to himself as he saw them steadily drawing away. 'It is of no use trying to force her through this; she goes smoothly enough if she is not driven.' He shouted down the tube to the engineer, 'Slow her down a little more; try her at nine knots.'

The change was clearly an advantage. She no longer buried her sharp bows in each wave; and although she quivered and shook as they struck her, her movement was lighter and easier than before. The wind was getting up, and the waves were longer and more regular; but this was an advantage to the boat, as it gave her more time to rise and fall upon them.

'She will do very well if we do not get worse than this before we get in,' the lieutenant said to himself; 'but I shall be very pleased when we see the harbour lights. I wonder what Miss Aspern would say to this; it is rather a contrast to our run three weeks ago.—You had better see to the lights,' he said aloud to the quartermaster, who had now been relieved at the helm. 'We are pretty well in the track of ships coming down the Channel, and the sun must have set now. Another three hours and we shall be in Queenstown.'

'We shan't be sorry for that, sir. This ain't the sort of craft to be knocking about in at night off the Irish coast in nasty weather. There ain't no comfort to be had in them: if you are down below you are pretty nigh smothered; if you are up here you are wet through every

minute with the spray, and think yourself lucky if it ain't green water sweeping along the deck.'

'Tell the cook to send me up a cup of cocoa, quartermaster. The men had better have a cup all round. If the sea gets up any more the cook won't be able to make it, and we shall have a roughish time before we get in.'

'I doubt if he can make it now, sir; she flings herself about so that there is no keeping the kettle upon the stove.'

'Well, if he can't, serve out a tot of grog all round, quartermaster.'

In five minutes the quartermaster returned with a mug of cocoa. 'The cook has made shift to make this, sir,' he said, with a twinkle in his eye; 'but he says as he could only boil a drop in the bottom of the kettle, so I suppose I had better serve out the grog?'

'I thought it would come to that, quartermaster,' the lieutenant said, smiling. 'But the cocoa would have been much better for the men.'

'Well, sir, it would generally; but most of them are so sick that they could not drink cocoa. Why, sir, I was sick myself just now, and I ain't never been sick before since my first voyage.'

'I have been ill myself, quartermaster, so I am not surprised at that. Well, let them have the grog, and tell the lookout to keep his eyes open for lights. It is rather thick, and vessels will be tearing down-Channel before this wind.'

Half-an-hour later there was a sudden crash, followed by two or three short bangs, then dead silence. The engine stopped.

'What is it?' Winter shouted down to the engine-room.

'I don't know yet, sir. I think her propeller has struck floating wood and got knocked off, and the jar has broken something in the engine.'

'Quartermaster, we must get a bit of sail up and keep her before the wind.'

It was not often that a torpedo-boat hoisted sail, which, indeed, was only carried for emergencies like the present.

'Look sharp about it, lads,' Winter said, 'before she has lost her steerage-way. If we get broadside on there will be no standing on the deck.'

In a short time sail was got on the foremast, and the boat was headed dead before the wind. Then the lieutenant went down into the engine-room.

'Anything serious, Mr Groves?'

'Yes, sir; one of the cylinder covers is split badly, and I fancy the crank is twisted.'

'Is there any repairing it?'

'There is no making a job of it until we get into port. I will try to stop up the crack, but with such a pressure of steam as we work with I doubt whether anything will stand.'

'Well, do the best you can,' the lieutenant said, 'or we shall be blown right into the Atlantic.'

I daren't try to make Queenstown, for tide as well as wind would be on her beam; and if we missed the port, as we should be pretty sure to do, nothing could save us.'

As soon as the lieutenant went on deck again he called the quartermaster.

'Get down aft, quartermaster, and see if she is making water.'

The sailor returned almost immediately.

'Yes, sir, she is leaking fast. It is pretty near up to the floor now.'

'Well, man the pumps at once, and then get a tarpaulin, and get it fixed over the stern. I expect when the propeller came off it touched the side, and the skin is no thicker than brown paper. Keep cool and steady, men,' he went on cheerily to them as they rigged the pump; 'we shall soon have the engine at work, and that will help you.'

Leaving the quartermaster to get the sail over the stern, the lieutenant went down into the engine-room.

'Either the propeller or the end of the shaft has made a hole in her skin, Mr Groves. You must disconnect the engine from the shaft, and set it to work the pump. You won't want pressure for that, and would help us if you could manage ever so little.'

'All right, sir; I will do the best I can. I am taking the cylinder cover off, and am going to put canvas underneath it, and then screw it down again with whitelead. It would not stand any pressure; but if we work with ten or twelve pounds of steam, it might do for the pumps.'

'Well, be as quick as you can, Mr Groves, for every minute is of consequence.'

Going on deck again, he went aft and saw to the sail being lashed securely under her bottom.

'Now we will go down aft, quartermaster; with some blankets and canvas, and see if we can get at the place and stop it inside.'

The water was already six inches over the floor-board when they descended. After some work they got to the stern-post, and found the water pouring in through a jagged hole a foot in length. It was close to the stern-post, and was difficult to get at. However, blankets and sails were jammed in, and kept in their place by some pieces of spars, sawn up and wedged against the bulkhead at the end of the compartment. When this was done the lieutenant went again to the engine-room.

'We cannot stop it altogether, Mr Groves, but it is not coming in so fast now.'

'I shall be ready in another few minutes,' the engineer said. 'I think it will work the pumps then if the crank is all right.'

'Have you any water below here?'

'No, sir; I have just taken up a plate to see.'

'That is satisfactory. It shows the bulkhead of the engine-room holds all right,' and the lieutenant again went on deck.

'Get the white light down, quartermaster ; we rank as a sailing-ship now.'

The minutes went on, and Winter listened impatiently for the revolving of the engine. In a quarter of an hour the engineer came up.

'I am sorry to say that it won't work, sir. The packing has blown out without her moving. It is that crank that does it.'

'Well, you must try again, Mr Groves,' the lieutenant said quietly. 'You had better see if you can't get the crank right first.—How is the water, quartermaster?' he asked as the engineer went down.

'Gaining, sir ; not very fast, but it is two inches deeper than it was when you came up. She is down a lot by the stern.'

'See that the boat is ready for launching, quartermaster. Get a compass, bag of biscuits, and a keg of water on board ; and you can put two or three bottles of rum in. I hope it won't come to that, but it is better to be prepared. Let the men put some of their things into their kit-bags ; not too much, you know. We don't want more weight on board than we can help ; but they may as well take their best things. We can heave them over if the sea gets too heavy. Send Brown to me.'

'Brown,' he went on as the man who worked as his servant came up, 'go below and pack my small portmanteau. Just put in my full-dress uniform and anything else it will hold. Put the signal-books in, and the log-book. Fasten the sextant-case and chronometer outside, so that they can all be carried together.'

Another two hours passed ; the utmost efforts of the engineer had been unavailing to start the engine ; the stern was below the water, and the bow stood up high in the air. Every wave as it followed ran up the deck.

'Get ready to launch the boat, quartermaster,' the lieutenant said ; and calling down the tube, he summoned the engineer and stokers on deck.

'I am going to take to the boat, Mr Groves. With this weight of water in her stern, she may break her back any moment and go down like a stone.'

The boat was swung out, and the men began to take their places in her, when the quartermaster said, 'There is a steamer's light, sir, coming up behind us.'

'Thank God for that !' the lieutenant said earnestly. 'Send up a signal-rocket and burn a blue light. Put two or three blue lights into the boat.'

The rocket soared up, and the blue light burned brightly.

'Now, quartermaster, let two men lower the boat ; we will get in when she is in the water. That is right. Now, fend her off carefully. Jump in, lads. There is a blue light on board the steamer, so she sees us.'

Groves and the lieutenant followed, and took their seats in the boat.

'Get out your oars, lads. Now, quartermaster, fire another blue light. That is right. She is not a mile astern ; we shall be on board in another ten minutes. Row steadily, men ; we have only got to keep her head to the sea, and the steamer will bear down to us and pick us up.'

They had rowed for five minutes when the stroke-oar said, 'She has gone, sir ; I think I saw the light of the side-lights a minute ago, and now it has disappeared.'

'Thank God we are out of her !' Winter said reverently. 'I was sure she could not stand that strain long. Another blue light, quartermaster ; the steamer is not a quarter of a mile away now.'

The steamer was still burning blue lights, and cheers came up from the sailors and passengers on board as the boat approached her side. A minute later a rope was thrown to her, and a ladder was lowered.

'Now watch your time, lads, and mind how you spring, one at a time—that is the way.'

It needed care, for the steamer was rolling heavily now that she had lost her way. All gained the ladder in safety, Winter being the last to leave the boat, which was then allowed to drop astern, to tow there for the present. The captain was standing at the top of the gangway when the lieutenant came up.

'I congratulate you, sir, on having saved all your hands.'

'I think,' Winter said, smiling, 'that it is to you those words should be addressed. Things were looking very bad when we saw your lights astern. The sea is not heavy yet for an open boat in good trim ; but we were closely packed, and the wind is getting up. The lookout would have been a poor one if you had not fortunately come along.'

'One of the torpedo-boats, the men told me ?'

'Yes ; No. 240. We struck a piece of floating wreckage, which carried away the propeller and knocked a hole through the skin ; the shock disabled the engine, so that it could not work the pumps.'

'Well, you will be glad to get into dry clothes. Mr Witherington, our purser, has a cabin ready for you ; fortunately the couple for whom it was reserved did not come on board. Your men have taken the portmanteau down there.'

Following the purser, the lieutenant made his way through the passengers, who were clustering round.

'Why, you have brought the large portmanteau, Brown. I told you the small one.'

'Well, sir, I thought it was a pity to leave pretty nigh everything behind ; and as I was able to put the sextant and chronometer in here, it did not take up more room, and I got it stowed away in the stern sheets snug enough.'

'Well, now we are here, I am glad you did, Brown, as I expect we shall have to cross the Atlantic and back, and it is certainly a comfort having one's own clothes. Now you had better

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hurry off, Brown, and find your own kit. I will come forward as soon as I have got into dry things, and see that the men get everything they want.'

As the lieutenant was dressing, the steward brought him a basin of hot soup, and the sight of this reminded him that he had had nothing since breakfast. As soon as he was dressed he went into the saloon. As he entered, one of the lady passengers rose and came towards him with outstretched hands.

'Miss Aspern!' he exclaimed in surprise.

'That is so, Mr Winter. I thought it was you when the boat came up, and I saw your face by the blue light. You see, they said it was a torpedo-boat when they saw your signal burning on board, and of course that added to my interest in the affair. But here is mamma wanting to speak to you.'

'We are very glad to see you, Mr Winter. Clemence was quite excited when the captain said it was one of the torpedo-boats. She said directly she felt sure that it was yours.'

'I am afraid that that is not a compliment to my seamanship, Miss Aspern.'

'It does not seem like it, certainly,' the girl replied. 'What I thought was, that we seemed fated to run against you. You see, we met at Montreal, and we met again at Cork, and so it seemed likely that we might meet again.'

'In other words, Miss Aspern,' the lieutenant

said laughingly, 'it struck you that I was the sort of man that was always turning up like a bad penny; but you must please excuse me now. I must go and look after my men, and see if they are comfortable.'

That duty was speedily performed. The men were all engaged in a hearty supper forward, Groves was established in the engineers' mess, and the lieutenant was not long in finding his way back to the saloon.

'I have not inquired yet as to the name of the ship, Miss Aspern. I need not ask where she is going after seeing you on board.'

'Her name is the *Manitoba*; and if you mean, of course, that she is going to New York, you are wrong; she is bound for Quebec.'

'Quebec?' he repeated in surprise. 'Why are you going round that way, Miss Aspern?'

'Well, the idea struck me that I should like to look in at Lucy Meadows again at Montreal; and as mamma didn't mind which way we went, here we are, you see.'

'Well, I regard it as a wonderful piece of luck, Miss Aspern—on my part, of course. I am very sorry to lose my boat, but fortunately I cannot be blamed for that. Anyhow, if she was to be lost, it could not have happened at a more convenient time and place.'

'Now you must tell us all about it, Mr Winter. I am all anxiety to know how that dear little boat came to be wrecked.'

THE INDUSTRIES OF IRELAND.

BELLEEK.

By MARY GORGES.



THE village of Belleek—the site of Ireland's only china factory—is on the banks of the river Erne, near the borders of Donegal and Fermanagh, and on the skirts of the Donegal highlands. Formerly it was one of the most poverty-stricken places in Ireland; now it is clean, thriving, and has excellent hotel accommodation—a change not owing to the many attractions which draw tourists to its neighbourhood, but to the industry established nearly forty years since—the creation, as it literally is, of the genius and industry of one man, Mr R. W. Armstrong.

Belleek bears witness to the fact that 'the true benefactors of Ireland are the manufacturers,' and that Ireland has no such friend 'as he who stimulates her children to develop at the same time their own great inherent powers and the neglected resources of their country.'

As often happens, the discovery of the riches contained in the soil was made by accident. I take a very clear and full account of this from a

paper contributed to the *Art Journal* about fifteen years after the establishment of the porcelain manufactory, to which it led: 'On the estate of John Caldwell Bloomfield of Castle Caldwell—of which Belleek forms a portion—it was observed that the cabin of a tenant was adorned by an unusually brilliant coat of whitewash. On being questioned, the peasant explained that he had lighted on an old lime-pit, or a supply of "naturally burned lime." This seemed so strange that Mr Bloomfield had the spot examined, and, in consequence of what he found, had borings made in different parts of his estate, which ere long disclosed the existence of a wide stratum of fine white earth. On chemical examination at Dublin this earth proved to be a species of kaolin—a feldspathic clay similar to that which forms the "bones" or interior infusible portion of Chinese porcelain. Other materials were necessary in order to establish a manufacture of pottery from this china-clay, but it proved that the description of feldspathic earth, which is fusible, and which in China, under the name of *pet-un-ze*, forms the

"flesh" or flux of the porcelain, was also to be found on Mr Bloomfield's estate, together with many other valuable minerals.'

These feldspars were submitted to Mr Armstrong, then architect and civil engineer by profession, and residing in London. He repeatedly visited Castle Caldwell, noting with keen eye not only the large quantities of feldspar and other mineral products, but the all but illimitable water-power available, where the Erne concentrates its force and empties itself in tremendous volume over the then picturesque Falls of Belleek. He had a number of trials made from the clay, feldspar, white quartz, &c. at the Royal Porcelain Works, Worcester, where Mr W. H. Kerr, one of the proprietors of these works, and an Irishman, interested himself heartily in having the Irish material tested and tried in every possible way. So satisfactory were the results that, having procured the co-operation of the local landlords, Mr Armstrong formulated a feasible scheme for the establishment of an Irish pottery, and laid it before Mr D. M'Birney, a wealthy Dublin merchant, well known for his energy and enterprise. He took the matter up warmly, ultimately embarking with Mr Armstrong in the practical trial of producing 'first-class ceramic goods in Ireland, made by Irish labour on Irish soil,' an enterprise which at once took root and flourished, and was carried on with singular success, until the death of Mr M'Birney in 1882, followed unfortunately only one year afterwards by that of Mr Armstrong, who was the resident partner and sole director of the works.

It was Mr M'Birney's money that had made the venture possible, while to Mr Armstrong's rare artistic ability and cultivated taste is due the very high standard of excellence which has made Belleek ware famous the wide world over. It may be judged, therefore, how overwhelming was the loss sustained by this still young industry, in which the hearts of its founders were bound up. Great fears, indeed, were entertained as to the possibility of continuing it; but happily, after some fluctuations, it weathered the storm, passing into the hands of its present proprietors, who are carrying it on successfully. The present manager, a native of the locality, is a worthy pupil of the late Mr Armstrong, and his great ability as a designer and modeller guarantees the same purity of taste in form and colour.

But to go back to 'beginnings'—that time of interest, uncertainty, and excitement, whether in the history of an individual or an enterprise. At the outset all the skilled labour was of necessity imported from Staffordshire; but very soon the natives of the district, who began as apprentices, became experts in the various processes of the manufacture, and now for many years the fame of Belleek has been solely made and maintained by native genius and industry.

At the International Exhibition in Dublin in

1865 the sight of this new description of ceramic ware, produced from Irish clays and feldspars by the skill of Irish hands and the exercise of Irish taste, took the general public by surprise—a surprise equalled by the admiration expressed for the porcelain exhibited, the purity and beauty of the material, the ivory tint of its lustrous glaze, and the modelling of its graceful proportions. But nothing excited so much enthusiasm as the groups in porcelain of sporting and other dogs, which delighted equally the keen sportsman and the skilled art judge. I have heard each of these speak of the spirit and beauty, the absolute truth to nature in attitude and expression, the exquisite modelling, of those dogs. The marine shell porcelains came from the same designer, a Mr Dunbar, who, though an amateur, worked with his own hands in the pottery, and to him in those early years it owed much.

A writer in the *Art Journal* says: 'The chief peculiarities of Belleek ornamental ware are its lightness of body, its rich, delicate, cream-like or ivory tint, and the glittering iridescence of its glaze. Although the principal productions hitherto have been formed of this white ware, local clays have been found which yield jet, red, and cane-coloured wares, and fac-similes of sea-shells and of branches of coral are shown by some of the agents which might well be supposed to be natural. The iridescent effect produced is somewhat similar to the ruby lustre of Gubbio majolica, that famous Italian enamelled ware of which an unrivalled collection is to be seen at the South Kensington Museum.'

Some of the illustrations which are given in the *Art Journal* convey a very clear idea of the great beauty of form and originality of design which was attained. Four of these illustrations are of pieces from a tea and dessert service ordered respectively by the Queen and the Prince of Wales, and mention is also made of a breakfast and dessert service as being then in progress for Her Majesty. To this I may add that quite recently the Queen was supplied with a breakfast-set costing fifty pounds.

The sea has suggested many of the designs for Belleek ware, as was natural from the proximity of the wild coast of Donegal. But the designer has the merit of being the first artist to use the sub-kingdom of the Radiata for his types. The animals of this great natural group are for the most part characterised 'by a star-shaped or wheel-shaped symmetry. From the globular shape of the commonest sea-urchin, through the flattened and depressed form of others of the family, the transition is regular and gradual to the well-known five-fingered starfish, and to those wonderfully branched and foliated forms which shatter themselves into a thousand fragments when they are brought up by the dredge from deep water and exposed for a moment to the air. Under the name of *frutti di*

mare these sea-eggs, covered as they are by innumerable pink and white spines, form a favourite portion of the diet of the southern Italians. When the spines by which the creature moves are stripped off, the projections and depressions of the testa, or shell, are often marked by great beauty of pattern; and it would hardly have been possible to bring into the service of plastic art a more appropriate group of natural models.' In more conventional designs, such as the mermaid, the nereid, the dolphin, and the sea-horse, a great excellence has been attained, and the happiest effect is produced by the contrast between the dead, Parian-like surface of the unglazed china and the sparkling iridescence of the ivory-glazed ground. This effect was very striking in the dessert-service made for the Prince of Wales. Three mermaids in Parian ware support the shell-formed base of the ice-pail, around which a group of Tritons and dolphins are sporting in the water. A wreath of coral surrounds the rim of the vase. The cover is, as it were, the boiling, surging sea, from which three sea-horses have partially risen, while in the centre a Triton riding on a dolphin forms the handle. Another piece of this service is a tazza-vase, considered 'one of the most faultless specimens that Irish taste has produced.' It stands on a pedestal, round which hangs a wreath of flowers dependent from rams' heads. 'The form is purely classic, the design as delicate as it is possible to wish anything to be, and the soft, creamy, unglazed white of the Parian ware—as this kind of biscuit is called—is equal, if not superior, to the finest specimens of any similar porcelain.'

The Belleek wares have found their way into the United States, Canada, India, and Australia. But any one wishing to judge at home of the present-day products can satisfy themselves, as I did, by a visit to the establishment of Mr Perceval Jones, Westmoreland Street, Dublin, that the former high standard of art is maintained, and that skill and taste continue to reign supreme in the manufacture of our one Irish porcelain. The new 'Neptune ware' is beautiful. I saw exhibited here the daintiest little afternoon tea-service in this—the tray shaped like a shell, with a rough surface to represent coral; the cups, cream-jug, and tea-pot formed likewise of glistening shells, the lid of the latter one shell; while the most delicate yet vivid green, the green of the budding grass, or rather of a certain filmy seaweed when, as it lies just under the water, it catches the glittering sunbeams, is wreathed like coral stems, so as to form both a rim and handles. The lovely contrast with pure and lustrous white may be imagined. The price of this tea-service was two pounds seven shillings and sixpence, which seemed to me moderate, remembering sums paid in former years for afternoon tea-services not to be compared to this in beauty of design or workmanship. There were many other specimens of Belleek china on view at this establishment:

baskets in open or trellis work, vases, flower-stands, jugs, little buckets and pails, some in marine design, some with shamrock-wreaths, and handles deftly moulded as coral or shamrock stems, to carry out the idea in each. The 'Irish pot' was very much in evidence, and exceedingly quaint and 'fetching' it looked in Parian. I saw pots and jugs which presented no appearance of cheapness, yet marked as low as one shilling.

My experience of Belleek ware on that day was not to end here. I was spending the afternoon with a friend, and noticed on the mantelpiece two most beautiful models of sporting dogs in this very Parian. It seems they had been bequeathed to the husband of my hostess, and were of great value. She had not heard their previous history, but it was easy to recognise them as some of the famous work designed and modelled by Mr Dunbar, and so admired at the Dublin Exhibition of 1865.

The glory of Belleek, and its speciality, is this exquisite Parian or ivory china, on which the stamp of approval has been set by many nations. It is to be found in all the cities and large towns in England, Ireland, and Scotland; also in Paris, and in the chief cities of America. Indeed, the trade with America is large and constantly increasing. Besides this fancy china, which includes dinner, breakfast, and tea services, and toilet sets, commoner wares are produced for household and for sanitary purposes. All requisites for kitchen, pantry, and dairy use are included in this household ware, while the sanitary is well known and recommended by the most eminent sanitary engineers in the United Kingdom. Many tons of this ware go to Paris annually.

The works, which are both substantial and extensive, present a fine architectural appearance, and are fitted up with all modern machinery and requisites for a first-class pottery. The decorative department is one of the most important and interesting, and so comprehensive as to include every known and approved means for the embellishment of ceramics. In the airy, well-lighted rooms the workmen may be seen busily engaged at the various branches, gilding, ground-laying, tinting, lustring, painting, &c. Over two hundred hands are employed at these works. Dinner-sets range in price from two pounds five shillings to sixteen pounds; breakfast-sets from two pounds ten shillings to fifteen guineas; toilet-sets from five shillings to two pounds ten shillings; and, as all are highly decorated, the prices seem only in fair and moderate proportion to the time and labour bestowed upon them. In illustration of this, take an ordinary Belleek dinner-plate, having a pretty floral pattern printed under glaze and finished in gold and colours. First of all the pattern must be carefully thought out in every detail and drawn on the plate, the better to judge of its effect. To be good it must be quite original and in strict

accordance with well-defined principles of design. When approved of it is handed over to the engraver, who engravés it on a sheet of copper, from which can be produced a countless number of fac-simile copies of the original design. When finished the copperplate passes on to the printer, who spreads a thin layer of soft colour, mixed with a peculiar kind of oil, all over its surface. Then, taking a large palette-knife, he cleans the colours off, save what is caught in the indentations made by the engraver's tool, and, laying a sheet of thin porous printing-paper over it, he passes it through a heavy press. This causes the colour that lay in the engraving to adhere to the paper, which is now removed and handed to the 'transferer,' who places it carefully, colour side downward, on the biscuit dinner-plate, and rubs it lightly with a flannel pad, after which it is immersed in water, when the paper is easily withdrawn, leaving the colours behind to form the pattern. The next stage is to the enamellers, where a portion of the design is filled with red, blue, yellow, and

other rich colours. The plate has yet to be glazed. As the colour is mixed with oil and the glaze is prepared with water, the necessity arises of firing the piece in the 'hardening-on' kiln, which has the effect of burning out the oil without detaching the colour. From the 'hardening-on' kiln it passes to the dipping-house, where it is dipped in the liquid which forms the glaze, and thence through the 'glost' oven. When the plate is enhanced by gilding, it requires an additional firing in the enamel-kiln, as gold will not stand the extreme heat of the 'glost' oven. After firing, it requires burnishing to make it shine in full brilliancy. Belleek turns out very high-class decoration in lovely shades of pink, mauve, blue, green, &c. To attain a still greater degree of perfection hand-painting is resorted to, and pretty designs are produced of birds, flowers, &c., and of local scenery, which is most admired. Recently one of the leading Indian Rajahs ordered a dinner-set decorated with local scenery and hand-painted, which cost fifty pounds.

THE MASTER AND THE BEES.

PART II.

HE honey really is beautiful this year, sir,' remarked Mrs Peggy, some weeks after the foregoing events, as she was putting a dish of it on the table for her master's simple tea; for Edward Martyn was old-fashioned in his habits, and stuck to the old-fashioned five o'clock tea, with the white cloth on the table, on which home-made teacakes, and home-made jams, and honey were set, but nothing of a more satisfying nature.

'Yes, I think it is the nicest we have had, Peggy. We could get a prize if we cared to exhibit.'

'The combs really is lovely, sir. I must show you a splendid piece I've got, and the honey draining from it grand.'

Suiting the action to the word, she fetched from her pantry stores a huge block of pure-white comb on one of those large, deep china dishes so much in vogue in our grandmothers' day.

'There!' she exclaimed triumphantly, setting it on the table; 'if that ain't a piece as any bee-fancier might be proud on, my name ain't Peggy Partington.'

'It's a pleasure to look at, and I really do feel proud of it, Peggy; and you may be equally so, for it is owing to your care and attention that the bees have flourished so well,' he replied, smiling.

Now, as he sat enjoying his honey, the thought came into his mind how much he would like Miss Adlington to taste it; and there and then

he determined to take her a jar and ask her acceptance of it. But the crucial point was how to get it conveyed to its destination without Peggy knowing. Somehow—he could hardly have said why—he did not care for her sharp eyes to see him carrying honey to Sycamore Cottage.

Late that night, when his housekeeper was sound asleep, the master crept stealthily, like a guilty schoolboy, into the pantry and counted the honey-jars.

'Nine!' he exclaimed. 'Ah! that's better than an even number. I can take one and rearrange them, I fancy, so that Peggy won't discover the theft.' And he did.

The next evening found him wending his way to Chestnut Lane, with a jar of honey securely tied up in two thicknesses of brown paper in the pocket of his tail-coat.

He felt more than usually awkward when he entered the pretty sitting-room in which Dorothy was seated by the open window at some fancy-work; but his nervousness increased tenfold after he sat down, for, on putting his hand behind him, to his horror he felt the honey trickling out of his pocket on to the chair. The perspiration stood in large drops upon his forehead, and he made several ineffectual attempts to rise, but felt as though he were glued to the chair. At length, making a desperate effort, he said hesitatingly:

'I've b-brought you some honey from my bees, and—'

'How kind of you!' interrupted Dorothy, anxious to put him at ease. 'I have often thought about

your naughty bees that gave you so much trouble, and wondered how they have behaved since. It was so tiresome for you.'

'I am very g-glad they swarmed here, or I should not have known you.'

'Then I am grateful to the bees too,' she replied, smiling; 'for I am glad to know you. But where is my honey? On the hall-table?'

'N-no; it's in my pocket, and I'm afraid—'

'Oh!' she exclaimed in a dismayed tone, 'it will be running away, and spoiling your pocket and coat. Oh, dear! dear!' This as she saw the honey like a snail-trail on the chair, from which he had risen in much trepidation.

'I really am so sorry,' he said, taking the sticky jar from his pocket.

'Oh, never mind,' she replied cheerfully. 'There are worse things at sea. A damp cloth will soon put the chair right. But I am afraid your coat is in a bit of a mess; and, despite her efforts to keep grave, she could not help laughing when she saw how woe-begone he looked.

He smiled too, but somewhat ruefully.

'I'm an awkward, blundering fellow. You'll wish me and the honey far enough, making such a mess.'

'Now, please, don't mind, Mr Martyn; there is no harm done. Here, Lizzie'—this to the neat, trim maid who had entered in obedience to her summons—'will you take this jar of honey Mr Martyn has kindly brought us, and bring a damp cloth to wipe off the stickiness? We have managed to spill a little somehow.'

After the coat-pocket had been well rubbed by Lizzie, and the wet towel applied here and there to the coat, Dorothy suggested that they should go into the garden to look at a rose-bush which was one mass of bloom, and one of her father's special favourites.

Here they found Mr Adlington engaged watering, picking off dead leaves, and tidying up generally.

Long after dusk they lingered in the still evening air, as though loath to break the spell that the golden red sunset had left upon them.

As before, Mr Martyn stayed to the dainty little supper; and when his eyes descried the ill-fated honey-jar he exchanged amused glances with Dorothy.

As he walked home that night through the silent streets of the little town, Edward Martyn knew that he loved Dorothy Adlington—loved her with the strong first love of a man who has all his life gone hungry and hardly realised it until the Land of Goshen was in sight. And now the silent stars told her name, the rustling leaves whispered 'Dorothy,' and the birds when they sang warbled 'Dor-r-r-r-o-o-thy,' 'Dor-r-r-o-o-o-thy,' over and over again, and his own heart trembled with a secret interwoven with joy and fear.

In those days a change came over the master.

The boys felt it, but could not have defined it; but somehow, when Jackson felt 'awfully down about his exam,' he found himself telling the master how disappointed his people would be if he did not pass, and sympathy and help being tendered him from 'Carrots'; and when Jimmy Beans lost his chance of the second-form prize, it was the master who, finding him weeping in a corner, comforted and cheered him by kindly words of encouragement; and Robinson said 'Carrots was a brick, as he took no end of trouble with that cad Evans, to show him how wrongly he had acted.'

Yes. Love—the glorifier, the beautifier, the transformer—had come into his life; and because of this he wanted to make every one around him brighter and happier. Even though he should never enter the gates of Eden, he knew that he was a better and truer man for knowing and loving Dorothy Adlington.

During that spring and following summer he found many excuses for coming to Sycamore Cottage; plants, roots, flowers, even bees and honey, were pressed into the service; and Mr Adlington, fond as he was of his garden, had never had it so gay.

One day, the talk turning on the varied colouring of butterflies, he ventured to ask father and daughter if they would spend an evening with him, and then he would show them his collection.

'I know it is worth looking at, for the curator at the museum in B— said it was the finest private collection he'd seen,' he added, with pardonable pride.

They thanked him, and said how pleased they would be to come; so one evening Dorothy, in her blue-and-white gown, which her father said 'matched her eyes,' set out with him to the schoolhouse.

She was delighted at the thought of seeing its oak doors and carved oak mantelpieces, as she had often heard them spoken of with veneration by lovers of the antique.

Mrs Peggy had put on the best damask table-cloth and brought out the blue-and-white china which had belonged to the master's grandmother, and placed in the centre the deep dish with a beautiful piece of honey in the comb; but it was his hand that gave the finishing touches to the table by placing here and there old-fashioned vases filled with blue-and-white flowers.

When Dorothy entered the oak-panelled room she thought she had never seen anything so quaint and old, and yet so pretty and dainty, in her life.

Of course she presided, and looked charming. He wondered if she remembered that it was in that 'frock' he had first seen her; he hoped she did.

The evening passed all too quickly; and the master, having interested, intelligent listeners, showed himself to the best advantage.

Mr Adlington was amazed at the splendid collection, not only of butterflies, but of all sorts of insects, that he had to exhibit to them, and expressed the hope that he might often come and explore the wealth the cases contained at his leisure.

In the dusk they walked down to the beehives; and, whilst Mr Adlington was busy contemplating something at the other end of the garden, Edward Martyn said:

'I take off my hat to my bees every day and whisper to them.'

'Do you?' replied Dorothy, laughing. 'What do you say?'

'I say, "Thank you, O Bees! Bees! for swarming at Sycamore Cottage."

Dorothy coloured slightly, but replied laughingly:

'How pretty and poetical of you!'

He looked at her, and what he would have said remained unspoken, for at that moment Mr Adlington's voice called out:

'Dorothy! Dorothy! come and look at this beautiful variegated leaf. I never saw one so delicately veined.'

As Edward Martyn helped the girl on with her pretty light wrap at the close of the evening, he wondered if he would ever have the exquisite bliss of folding her in his arms and saying, 'My wife.' He prayed God that he might.

And Dorothy? After kissing her father good-night, instead of getting into bed she sat, with her lovely hair falling about her shoulders, thinking, and Edward Martyn occupied by far the larger portion of her thoughts.

Did Mr Adlington suspect that his 'little girl's' heart had been stolen by the grave, shy scholar? If he did he never said so; but he smiled to himself when he found flowers and honey so plentiful that year.

The autumn following that summer lingered long; and in October, with its red, russet, and yellow leaves and changing tints, came the crowning glory of an Indian summer.

It was on one of those days redolent with the scents of autumn that the master went to London, none knew why or where; but the stroke of two found him in Wimpole Street, inside the consulting-room of one of the leading physicians of the day.

He was a brave man where physical pain was concerned; still, he dreaded the verdict that the great doctor would pronounce, not because of what he might have to suffer, but—*because he loved.*

'As you ask me to tell you the exact truth,' the physician said, not unkindly, 'I must say that your symptoms are very grave. The heart is considerably dilated; still, with care—great care, you know—you may live many years.'

Edward Martyn listened as one in a dream.

'What is your profession or business?'

'I am a schoolmaster.'

'Ah! Ahem! Well, as long as you can teach without exciting yourself you are all right.'

'Thank you,' he said as he rose to go. 'I suppose the pain will always be present?'

'Not necessarily; this prescription may do much for you. Still, I repeat, you must be very careful.'

Out again in the brilliant autumn sunshine, amidst the happy chattering groups of men and maidens, boys and girls, he wondered what burden each one carried under a careless exterior, for it seemed to him then as though every one must lie in the shadow.

On he walked, heedless of time, till he found himself crushing beneath his feet the yellow, golden leaves fallen from the trees in Hyde Park; then he realised how far he had come and how late the hour. He retraced his steps quickly, then stopped suddenly in his hurried walk, saying, 'I forgot; I must not hurry,' and called a hansom.

He reached home at the time he had stated, and Peggy had supper awaiting him; but she ventured to remonstrate when she came to take away the things and noticed that he had scarcely touched the food that she had prepared with so much care.

'Really, sir, I do think as you did ought to see a doctor. You've been quite off your food lately.'

He smiled faintly. 'How little she knew! And how her warm, honest heart would grieve when she did know!' he thought.

'It is a shame, Peggy, that such good cooking should be unappreciated; but I am not just up to the mark. When the holidays come, and I get a good rest, I shall feel better. It only wants a few weeks.'

'A few weeks!' snapped Peggy. 'What you want, sir, if I may make so bold, is rest now, not to wait for the holidays. Them boys 'ud wear out an archangel, let alone a human.'

At this the master laughed heartily in spite of himself, telling Peggy he was sorry that she entertained so poor an opinion of his promising pupils.

Three or four weeks passed—weeks of conflict and indecision, and weeks in which he purposely avoided Dorothy. Day after day and hour after hour he asked himself the question, Would it be right to ask her to become his wife under the circumstances of his delicate health? And at length he decided it would not; but only God and himself knew what that decision cost him.

'I will tell her I love her, and why I cannot ask her to be my wife; for I should like the little girl to know, though she can never be mine, that she has won all I ever had and ever shall have to give: the love of a poky—yes, that was what they called me—old bookworm. Oh! but it's hard, my God! What awful limitations this life has!' Thus he thought.

Again he stood by the bee-hives, decaying leaves and signs of approaching winter around ; and yet over all there lingered the last faint touches of the dying autumn.

The town was keeping holiday in honour of some local event, and Mrs Peggy had gone to see the display of bunting, &c., leaving tea ready in the oak-panelled room ; but the master did not feel like holidaying. As he paced the gravel path backwards and forwards his thoughts went back to that day in spring when he heard the girlish voice saying, 'He's far cleverer than any one in the town. It's better to be clever and shy than'— And he knew now that his then unknown champion was Dorothy Adlington. Had he not learnt by heart every tone of her voice and— Why, there it was sounding in his ears this very moment, as, the garden-door being gently opened, he heard :

'Mr Martyn ! Mr Martyn ! are you there ?' and a laughing face appeared round the corner.

He came forward ; and, in her sweet, unconventional way, Dorothy extended her hand, saying :

'I rapped several times ; then I rang ; and, getting no answer, I thought I'd try the garden as a last resource. So I came into the lane, and peeped in, and saw you. Father has sent you a message. He has not been out for several days ; he has had a nasty cold, and I have been doctoring him, and he is a little tired of poultices and gruel, and wonders if you will take pity on him and have a game at chess—will you ?'

He looked at her with a sort of pained look in his eyes, and she knew in an instant that he was not well, not himself. Her face changed, and she said gently :

'Aren't you well, Mr Martyn ? I am so sorry.'

He moved a step nearer and answered :

'I am not very well ; but, Dor—Miss Adlington, will you listen to me for a few minutes—let us stand by the bee-hives—while I tell you what perhaps you may care little to hear ?'

The hot blood suffused her cheeks, and as she looked at him something in her shy eyes told him that there might have been hope for him ; but she answered not a word. For a moment there was absolute silence, unless for the floating of a leaf here and there, which the soft south wind carried away from the trees.

'I went to London a few weeks ago,' he continued, 'to consult one of the first physicians about myself ; and—the verdict is bad. My heart is seriously affected, and—I can never hope to marry ; but, oh, Dorothy !—here he touched her hand—'had I been strong and well I had hoped one day to gain your love ; but my dream is over. Only, my darling ! my darling !—here he took her unresisting hands, and looked into her face with a great, tender love—'I wanted you to know that I loved you from the first night I saw you —nay, even before ; and here by the bees, which have shared my joy, I tell you, my little girl,

that you are my first and only love. Even though it is nothing to you, I felt it was right that you should know it.'

'But it is something to me,' she answered in a low, tremulous voice.

'Dorothy !' he exclaimed, 'is it possible that you care for me ?' and, throwing aside all the restraint he had imposed upon himself, he clasped her in his arms.

'Only for once, just once, my little girl. Never again ; only this once.'

For a moment or two neither spoke, and then Dorothy said softly :

'Tell me all the doctor said.'

So, pacing slowly up and down in front of the hives, out of which a stray bee crept now and again, he told her all : how he had loved her ; how he had longed to tell her so, and dared not, thinking she would never care for an old 'poky' (he smiled grimly as he uttered the word) fellow like him ; and yet he had hoped. Then came the crushing blow—the doctor's verdict.

'I had not felt well for some time,' he said, 'but put it down to ordinary causes—overwork, &c. But latterly the pain at my heart had become so severe at times that I knew there must be something wrong ; but I never dreamt I was suffering from anything serious. So, now, darling, if I have done wrong in speaking to you of my love, forgive me ; but I could not bear the thought that you should think I had paid you attention and meant nothing by it. Again I say, forgive me.'

'There is nothing to forgive,' replied Dorothy sadly. 'I would far rather know that you loved me. I think it an honour to be loved by you.'

'Oh Dorothy !'

Again there was silence, in which the busy hum of the little town came floating towards them, accompanied by the discordant sounds of various sorts of music. Edward Martyn thought that he should ever retain those sounds in his brain, and a similar thought was in Dorothy's mind. At length he said wistfully :

'The doctor said the medicine might do much for me ; perhaps ?—'

'Oh ! you will get strong and well if you take great care and do as he told you. People often live the longest who have to be careful,' she said, smiling at him.

'And then, would you be my wife, Dorothy ?'

He read the answer in her face, though she did not reply in words.

'But, my darling, it does not seem fair to ask you to wait. You must be perfectly free, so that if—'

'If any one else asks me I can say yes,' she interrupted, laughingly. 'Then you don't really mind very much.'

The laugh was infectious, and a great hope sprang up in him at that moment that he would get better.

They talked on oblivious of time, until Dorothy, hearing the church clock strike, exclaimed :

'Father will think I am lost.'

'May I come in this evening, then ?'

'Father asked you,' she replied demurely.

He took her hand and drew her towards him, and saying, 'May I ?' kissed her reverently.

'I am glad it was by the bees that I told you of my love. I wonder if they know all they have done for me. I owe them much.'

'I, too, am in their debt,' she said, smilingly, as she closed the garden-door behind her.

It was thus the master told his love.

In a sunny garden, facing the south, a man and woman stood gazing at the fair scene that stretched out before them. They had been silent for some minutes, lost in happy memories ; then he turned towards her, and taking her hand, said :

'Dorothy, you've never regretted it ?'

The look she gave him satisfied him, though she spoke no word ; and again there was the silence born of perfect understanding.

Suddenly a dark speck loomed on the horizon, and she exclaimed :

'There they are, Edward !'

'What ? Where ? The bees ?' he answered excitedly. 'So they are. Now we must manage to take them somehow.'

'Oh, we shall manage them all right. They are coming in our direction. I have become an adept at swarm-taking since the days at Bury-cum-Thorpe.'

The master took off his hat as the dark mass came nearer, and made obeisance to them, saying as he did so :

'Every day I thank you, O Bees ! Bees ! and to-night I thank you again.'

ANTIQUITY GOBLETS AND DRINKING-VESSELS.

UCH of the best work of the craftsmen of former times was expended on the ornamentation of the gold and silver goblets and drinking-vessels of various kinds, regarded by our ancestors as among their most precious possessions. These old 'mazers' and tankards, moreover, with their humbler relatives in brown stoneware, have many an association with various phases of social life which have passed away ; and the sense of an allusion in literature may often be missed without some knowledge of the curious names and shapes with which they have been endowed.

In Anglo-Saxon days, when long and deep potations were frequent, the drinking cup or horn was held in high estimation, and the old poem in *Beowulf* tells us that among the treasures of the ancient barrow guarded over by the monster Grendel is 'the solid cup, the costly drinking-vessel.' The skull of a fallen foe was not infrequently employed for this purpose. Drinking-cups are often found in Anglo-Saxon tombs, some discovered in the barrows of Kent being of glass, and made on the 'tumbler' principle, so that their contents should be emptied at one draught.

One of the earliest vessels which have come down to us is the celebrated Horn of Ulphus, made of an elephant's tusk, and dating from a period shortly before the Conquest. This horn—now in York Cathedral—is supposed to have been placed on the altar by Ulph, the son of Thorald, the lord of much land in East Yorkshire, in token that he bestowed certain lands on the church of St Peter. Another version of the story is, that this worthy Dane, when his sons were disputing as to the succession to his estate, cut short the dispute by repairing to York Minster, and there

draining the horn before the high-altar as a pledge and evidence of the gift of all his lands and revenues to the Church.

Among curious examples of drinking-vessels are the Peg Tankards, one of which, made of oak, with the figures of the twelve apostles round the sides, was found in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. King Edgar, it is said at the instigation of Dunstan, put down many ale-houses, and ordained that pegs should be fastened in the drinking-horns at intervals, in order that whosoever drank beyond certain of these marks at a single draught should be liable to punishment. These peg tankards were divided into eight draughts by means of the pegs, and usually contained two quarts. The edict, however, does not appear to have had the intended effect, for in 1102 we find Anselm decreeing that no priest should 'go to drinking-bouts nor drink to pegs.'

One of the earliest examples of the Mazer (called after a Norse name of the 'maple') is that preserved at Herballdown Hospital, near Canterbury, which dates from the reign of Edward I. This maple-wood bowl stands on a low foot, and measures about eight inches in diameter at the upper edge. It is mounted in silver-gilt, and at the bottom contains a silver-gilt medallion representing Guy of Warwick transfixing a dragon with his lance, while a lion seems about to attack. This cup, which holds six pints of wine, was used at the yearly feast in memory of St Nicholas. Another mazer of the time of Richard II. is of highly polished wood, and has on its silver-gilt rim the following engraved exhortation :

In the name of the Trinitie,
Fille the cup, and drink to me.

Mazers were sometimes lined with silver and

adorned with carving, after the fashion of the one alluded to by the poet Spenser in the lines :

Then lo, Perigot ! the pledge which I plight,
A mazer ywrought of the maple ware,
Wherein is enhased many a fair sight
Of bears and tigers that maken fierce war.

Frequently the mazer was without feet, and can hardly be distinguished from an alms-dish.

Passing from these ancient vessels—mostly the property of some ecclesiastical foundation—to the more secular Goblet, we find many examples of the high importance which was attached to it in the wills and bequests of early times. The standing cup in which it was customary to receive the wine from the butler's hand, after it had been duly tested or 'essayed,' was at times termed a 'Hanap,' from which the word 'hamper' is supposed to be derived. Various materials were employed in the construction of the more costly vessels, such as gold, silver, the egg of the ostrich, the shell of the coco-nut, and curiously mottled woods.

Cups had frequently distinguishing names and titles ; thus, Richard, Earl of Arundel, in 1392 bequeaths to his wife Philippa her own cup, called 'Bearchier ;' while another nobleman of a rather earlier date has a cup of gold with an acorn, called 'Benesoune,' and another which went by the name of 'Wassail.'

In the middle of the fifteenth century we find the Prior of Durham mentioning one of his drinking-vessels as 'Beda,' and another as 'Abell.' The standing cup and cover which was sometimes placed on the table, and at others was handed to the lord when he chose to drink, is called a hanaper in Lord Latimer's will in the year 1381—'le grant hanaper d'argent endoeré appellé Seint George.'

The constant fear of poison in which the richer classes stood in former times is often illustrated in the manufacture of drinking-vessels. It was believed that cups made of the horn of the narwhal had the power of detecting poison. Frequent use was made of turquoises, amethysts, crystals, and other precious stones in ornamenting goblets, with some such idea beyond the ostensible purpose of decoration. Queen Elizabeth's silver-gilt cup, standing on three knobs, has its cover, sides, and knobs covered with amethysts of various tints, the interstices being filled with small turquoises.

Precious stones were believed to be endowed with many mystical qualities. The turquoise was supposed to have the power of strengthening the eyes, and was also of use in detecting the presence of poison, by becoming of a paler hue. The opal, however, in the goblet of Pope Alexander VI. did not avail him in escaping the fate traditionally assigned to him. In a similar fashion, crystals of various kinds were believed to become clouded. Thus the so-called Poison Cup belonging to Clare College, Cambridge, has a crystal mounted in the centre of the lid. In a translation of Petrarch's *Phisicke against Fortune* (published about 1579) we have a dialogue of 'cuppes made of precious

stones,' in which one of the characters—'Joy' by name—is made to say, 'I am desyrons to drynke in cups of precious stones ;' to which 'Reason' replies, 'Perhaps there is some other cause of so fervent desire : for it is not the glistening only that allureth thee, but some hydden virtue, for who is able to declare all the operations and virtues of precious stones ?' And he adds, 'There have been some that have beleeved that by virtue of this stone [the amethyst] promysing them sobrietie they might boldly quaffe without fear of drunkennesse.'

The Duke of Anjou possessed thirty-nine gold and silver goblets in the fourteenth century ; and Charles V. of France had fully as many, and among them one of jasper. Crystal ones were in use, and a sapphire surmounted the cover of a goblet belonging to the queen of Philippe le Bel. While the French King John was a captive in England, we find him paying to a certain John Corbiere, a goldsmith of London, three hundred and nine moutons d'or for a goblet weighing nearly six marks, from which he drank until the English kings graciously sent him his own as a present. The memento given by Pope Clement to the unfortunate Charles VI. took the form of a goblet of rock-crystal mounted in gold.

A gilt cup in the shape of a lamp figured in the trousseau of Mary of Burgundy, Countess of Cleves, at the commencement of the fifteenth century ; and we have notice of another made like a candlestick. Cups of the Elizabethan age were occasionally fashioned as gourds or melons, with feet formed as their twisted stems and tendrils. At times they were made to represent birds, as the 'Cockayne' Cup belonging to the Skinners' Company, presented by the widow of a gentleman named Peacock.

One of the finest examples of the goldsmith's art in Stuart times is the Royal Oak Grace Cup, presented to the Barber Surgeons' Company by Charles II. It is over sixteen inches high, and formed as an oak-tree, the trunk and branches supporting the bowl, while the royal crown serves as a cover.

During the sixteenth and following century the quaint Wager or Surprise Cups were in fashion. A familiar example of these takes the form of a woman holding a smaller cup over her head, with arms upstretched, the object of the drinker being to drain the contents of the larger cup without spilling the liquid in the smaller one. Another vessel used for betting purposes was the *Gobelet-à-moulin*, or windmill goblet, provided with a small whistle, which, on being blown, set in motion the sails of the mill ; and before they had stopped working, the cup was to be drained.

Grotesque forms were often given to drinking-vessels. Such are the graybeards or Bellarmines, with their rotund bodies, narrow necks, and Silenus-like masks in front, made of a grayish-coloured stoneware, covered by a mottled brown glaze. Cardinal Bellarmine's countenance would appear to have been quite unlike these effigies ; they seem to have been made in Holland when

religious disputes were fierce, and may have been intended by one party to bring ridicule on the other. Another explanation is provided in the story of an Oxford student who, one day returning with a jug of ale under his cloak, on being questioned by a university official, replied that he had merely been to borrow the works of Bellarmine! These grotesque vessels are frequently referred to by writers of the time of Elizabeth and the earlier Stuarts.

Representations of misshapen human beings are to be found among the drinking-vessels of antiquity; and of a similar character is the Toby Pitcher, or image mug, produced in the Staffordshire and other potteries. Another curious bowl, of large dimensions, was styled a 'Jeroboam,' and was generally wrought of metal. The high-stemmed wine-glass of the seventeenth century was sometimes called a 'Tall-boy.'

Of leather vessels, the most famous was the 'Black Jack,' so called because it resembled a jack or coat of mail or leather. Akin to this, though more capacious, was the 'Bombard,' deriving its name from the huge piece of ordnance so called. References to both of these are frequently to be met with in the literature of the seventeenth century. Thus Grumio, in the *Taming of the Shrew*, says to Curtis, 'Be the jacks fair within, the jills fair without.' And again, in the first part of *Henry IV*, Prince Hal describes Falstaff as that 'swoln parcel of dropsies, that hugh bombard of sack'; and in the *Tempest* a black cloud is likened to a 'foul bombard that would shed his liquor.' In the *Philocothionista* of Heywood the dramatist we read that 'small jacks wee have in many ale-houses of the citie and suburbs tipt with silver, besides the great black jacks and bombards at the court, which, when the Frenchmen first saw, they reported at their returne into their country that the Englishmen used to drink out of their bootes.' Bishop Hall in his *Satires* speaks of 'charging whole boots full to their friends' welfare'; and, indeed, it is on record that actual boots have been employed as drinking-vessels. Marshal Bassompierre, who was sent on an embassy to Switzerland in 1625, drank his friend's health in one of his military boots before returning, ordinary cups being too small for the occasion. Once, too, it was considered a mark of gallantry to toast a fair lady from her shoe. In the song of 'Sir John Barleycorn'—an allegory of the grain of barley, which the farmer, the maltster, the miller, and the brewer are bent on destroying—we read that

Some of them fought in a black-jack,
Some of them in a can;
But the chiefest in a black-pot,
Like a worthy alderman.

The rim of the black-jack was often of silver, and occasionally gilt and decorated with little bells. A test of sobriety, therefore, came to be to drink from one of these vessels or jingle-boxes without producing a tinkling.

The word tankard as applied to drinking-vessels occurs for the first time in the later half of the sixteenth century, and later on we find many examples of tall tankards of ornate design. The most common and familiar article in the cottage of former days was the jug or pitcher of earthenware, often with a set of doggerel rhymes around its rim. One such mug of the peculiar putty-like colour so frequently imitated since bears an inscription telling us that—

This is Thomas Coxe's cup.
Come, my friends, and drink it up.
Good news is come'n, the bells do ring,
And here's a health to Prussia's king.

Another large mug of the famous Fulham brown stoneware is of the year 1740, and is inscribed with the legend, 'Walter Vaughan of Hereford. His mugg, must not be brock!' The beautiful glaze and polish which is a feature of the best pottery of the kind is due to the presence of salt in vapour in the kiln. The earliest notices of stoneware jars in this country occur in the first half of the sixteenth century, and we hear of many with silver covers and neck-mounts at that period, the jugs themselves being probably imported from Cologne. These old drinking-vessels are now very rare and fetch high prices, three stone jugs from the Staniforth collection being sold in 1889 for over three hundred and fifty pounds; while a good specimen of the year 1560, though of small size, realised seventy-one pounds in 1890.

YOUTH AND AGE.

NEW VERSION.

With anxious eyes and rigid arms,
With failing breath and odd grimaces,
I rob the cycle of its charms
In quiet places.

But, like a swift and sudden gust,
My grandson, with a smile seraphic,
Goes past me in a cloud of dust
To find the traffic.

He's just a shrimp a girl could toss;
His legs the size of Roman candles,
He wears them mostly thrown across
His battered handles.

At every hill where I dismount
He coasts—or, stay! I think it's 'cruises.'
One day I tried in vain to count
The youngster's bruises.

Ah me! but I am riding down
The Hill that leads into the Distance,
While he is rising to the crown
Of dear Existence.

A word while yet the pace is slow,
From one, my boy, who seldom meddles:
In tempting hills you do not know
Retain your pedals.

E. H. BEGBIE.